

Section 1: Introduction

Idaho's Commercial Driver's License (CDL) Program is designed to improve safety on our highways by meeting federal requirements for testing and licensing commercial drivers. On October 26, 1986, Congress passed the Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1986. This law sets minimum standards for the licensing of drivers of commercial motor vehicles. The standards require commercial motor vehicle drivers to get a Commercial Driver's License (CDL). You must have a CDL to operate any of the following commercial vehicles:

- Combination vehicle with a gross combination weight rating (GCWR) of 26,001 or more pounds, provided that the gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) of the towed unit is greater than 10,000 pounds.
- Single vehicle with a gross vehicle weight rating of 26,001 or more pounds.
- Vehicle designed to transport 16 or more persons (including the driver).
- Any size vehicle that requires hazardous material placards.

Gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) is the manufacturer's assigned weight rating for the vehicle (truck, bus, or trailer), not the vehicle's registered weight. On trucks, the GVWR is usually found on a metal identification plate inside the driver's door. On trailers, it may be found anywhere but is commonly found on the front of the trailer on the driver's side. For Idaho, in the absence of a GVWR, the actual weight of the vehicle plus its heaviest load is considered to be the GVWR. Other states may use other definitions.

Gross combined weight rating (GCWR), is figured by adding the GVWR of each unit of a combination vehicle.

Even if your vehicle is a commercial vehicle according to the definition above, you may qualify for one of the CDL exemptions. There are four categories of CDL exemptions.

The **recreational vehicle exemption** applies to drivers of vehicles used exclusively to transport personal possessions or family members for nonbusiness or recreational purposes.

The **military vehicle exemption** applies to military vehicles operators who are considered active-duty military personnel and to civilians who are required to wear uniforms and are subject to the Code of Military Justice.

The **emergency vehicle exemption** applies to drivers of fire fighting or other emergency equipment used in response to emergencies involving the preservation of life or property.

The **farm vehicle exemption** applies to drivers of farm vehicles, including family members and farm hands, under certain conditions only. The farm exemption applies to drivers of farm vehicles which are:

1. controlled and operated by the farmer;
2. used to transport agricultural products, supplies, and machinery to or from a farm;

This Section Covers:

- Licenses and Endorsements
- Fees
- How to Get a CDL
- CDL Tests
- Safety Rules

3. not used in common or contract carrier operations; and
4. not driven more than 150 miles (“as the crow flies”) from the farm.

The farm exemption is intended for small farm-to-market operations only. It does not extend beyond the boundaries of Idaho. It does not include farmers who are transporting other farmers’ products if they are receiving any compensation for the services.

This manual provides you with the information necessary to pass all CDL written tests. Information regarding the skills test requirements is also included. The headings on the outside margins of the pages may help you locate specific topics of interest.

There are three types of commercial driver’s licenses: Class A, B and C. Drivers of vehicles that do not fall in Classes A, B, or C will be issued Class D (non-commercial) licenses.

1.1
LICENSES AND
ENDORSEMENTS
- License Classes

Class A - Combination vehicles with a gross combined weight rating (GCWR) of 26,001 or more pounds, provided the GVWR of the vehicle(s) being towed is greater than 10,000 pounds. A driver with a Class A license may, with the proper endorsements, operate vehicles requiring a Class B, C or D license.

Class B - Single vehicles with a GVWR of 26,001 or more pounds, or any such vehicle towing a vehicle under 10,000 pounds GVWR. A driver with a Class B license may, with the proper endorsements, operate vehicles requiring a Class C or D license.

Class C - Vehicles with a GVWR or GCWR less than 26,001 pounds. Class C is strictly for vehicles designed to carry 16 or more people (including the driver), or carry hazardous materials requiring the vehicle to display placards. A driver with a Class C license may also operate vehicles requiring a Class D license.

- Endorsements

You must have the appropriate endorsement on your CDL if you haul hazardous materials, pull double or triple trailers, or drive tank or passenger vehicles.

H - Hazardous materials - Required for drivers of vehicles transporting hazardous materials that require hazardous material placards per the Hazardous Materials Transportation Act. A written test is required at each driver license renewal date.

T - Double/Triple - Required for drivers of vehicles pulling two or three trailers. (A dolly or load divider, sometimes referred to as a “jeep” is considered to be one trailer.)

N - Tank vehicles - Required for drivers of vehicles designed to transport liquids or gaseous materials within a tank that is either permanently or temporarily attached to the vehicle or chassis. Such vehicles include, but are not limited to, cargo tanks and portable tanks, as defined in hazardous materials regulations. This definition does not include portable tanks having a rated capacity under 1,000 gallons.

P - Passenger - Required for drivers of vehicles designed to carry 16 or more passengers including the driver. Both written and skills tests are required to obtain this endorsement.

M - Motorcycle - Motorcycle operators must have an “M” endorsement on their Class D or Commercial Driver’s License. A motorcycle means every motor

vehicle having a seat or saddle for the use of the rider and designed to travel on not more than three wheels in contact with the ground, but excluding a tractor and moped. Motorcycle operators must pass a written and skills exam to add the endorsement. See the separate motorcycle manual (which can be obtained from the sheriff's office) for details.

L - Prohibits driving of vehicles with air brakes. The CDL will carry this restriction unless you pass an air brakes knowledge test and a skills test in a vehicle equipped with air brakes.

- Restrictions

A Seasonal Commercial Driver's License is available to qualified seasonal drivers for certain farm-related service industries such as custom harvesters, farm retail outlets and suppliers, agri-chemical businesses, and livestock feeders.

**1.2
SEASONAL CDL
FOR FARM RELATED
SERVICES**

The Seasonal CDL is only valid within 150 miles of the business or farm being serviced. The Seasonal CDL is valid (with a Class D license) for 180 days in a 12 month period, and can only be obtained twice in a lifetime.

The Seasonal CDL is not valid for driving Class A (combination) vehicles or passenger vehicles constructed to carry 16 or more people including the driver. The Seasonal CDL is not valid for driving vehicles carrying hazardous materials requiring placards except for diesel fuel in quantities of 1,000 gallons or less, liquid fertilizers in vehicles or implements of husbandry with total capacities of 3,000 gallons or less, or solid fertilizers that are not mixed or transported with any organic substance.

To apply for a Seasonal CDL you must:

- Requirements

- Be at least 16 years of age,
- Have a valid Class D license,
- Have at least 1 year of driving experience in any type of motor vehicle,
- Have not violated the CDL single license requirements,
- Have not had any license suspensions, revocations or cancellations,
- Have not had any convictions in any vehicle for any of the following offenses;
 - Excessive speeding (15 or more miles above the posted speed limit),
 - Reckless driving,
 - Improper or erratic lane changes,
 - Following the vehicle ahead too closely,
 - Violation of any other motor vehicle traffic control laws which result in a fatal traffic accident,
 - Driving while under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance, including a refusal to test,
 - Leaving the scene of an accident, or
 - Using a vehicle to commit a felony.

The holder of a Seasonal CDL is subject to all disqualifying offenses and requirements applicable to CDL holders. Each applicant's driving record will be checked prior to issuance of a Seasonal CDL. Issuance of a Seasonal CDL will be entered on CDLIS.

The holder of a Seasonal CDL must pass the CDL General Knowledge written test. The CDL Air Brakes test is required if vehicles equipped with air brakes will be driven. Endorsement tests and skills tests are not required.

• CDL license		1.3
- one year (age 20)	\$12.25	CDL FEES
- three year year (age 18 to 21)	\$20.50	
- four year (age 21 and over)	\$28.50	
• Seasonal CDL (180 Days)	\$27.50	
• CDL instruction permit	\$19.50	
• Duplicate CDL or permit	\$11.50	
• License upgrade	\$15.50	
• Endorsement addition (after issuance of a CDL, does not include written test fee)	\$11.50	
• Written tests (each)	\$ 3.00	
• Skills test (\$5 to Driver's License Office, \$50 to Skills Tester)	\$55.00	

To apply for a commercial driver's license, you must be at least 18 years old and either have a valid Idaho non-commercial license (Class D) or have passed all tests required to obtain one. You may be able to take your Class D license tests and your CDL tests at the same time. However, you must have one year of driving experience in order to obtain a CDL.

1.4

HOW TO GET A CDL

To apply for your CDL, go to your county sheriff's office. Bring your current driver's license, Social Security card, and money to pay your fees.

You will be asked if you are subject to and in compliance with the requirements of Part 391 of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (Qualifications of Drivers). These include the DOT medical card requirements. Information regarding who is subject to these requirements may be found inside the back cover of this manual.

Copies of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations may be obtained from:

Idaho Motor Transport Association
5171 Overland Road
Boise, ID 83705
Phone: (208) 342-3521
or online at www.fmcsa.dot.gov

Providing false or incorrect information when applying for your driver's license may result in cancellation of your driving privileges and other penalties. If you obtain a CDL using false or incorrect information, you will be disqualified from operating a commercial motor vehicle for a period of 60 days.

When applying for your CDL, your driving record will be checked, fees will be collected, and you will take the necessary knowledge tests. After passing the knowledge tests, you must schedule a skills test. The sheriff's office will provide you a list of Third Party Skills Testers. After passing the skills test, you may obtain your CDL at the sheriff's office.

A CDL instruction permit is available by taking the appropriate written tests for the type of vehicle you will operate. An instruction permit is valid for up to 180 days. You must be accompanied by a driver properly licensed to operate the vehicle you are driving. This person must occupy the seat beside the driver.

- Instruction Permits

A CDL will be issued only after you have passed all required written and skills tests.

1.5

CDL TESTS

- Knowledge Tests

All test results remain valid for one year. If the appropriate license is not issued within the one-year period, the tests must be retaken.

If you do not pass a test, you must wait three (3) days before retaking the test. Test fees must be paid again.

CDL tests are not required at renewal time, with the exception of the Hazardous Materials test which must be passed prior to each renewal.

Applicants must take the knowledge tests for the class of license applied for and the test(s) for any endorsement(s) they wish to hold. In the front of this manual following the Table of Contents, you will find a table showing you which sections of this manual to study for each test.

After passing the written tests, you must make an appointment with a Third Party Tester to take the skills test. The skills test will take two to three hours to complete and must be taken in a vehicle that is representative of the license class you wish to operate. If the vehicle used for the test is not equipped with air brakes, your CDL will show a restriction stating that you are not licensed to operate vehicles equipped with air brakes. Some testing sites have vehicles that you can rent. When you go to the skills tester, you will need to bring proof of identification, proof of insurance, and your receipt showing you have passed the written tests and paid the skills test receipt fee.

- Skills Test

The skills test has three parts: the vehicle inspection, the basic control skills test, and the road test. (Sections 10, 11, and 12 tell you how to prepare for the skills test.)

After completing the testing process, please wait 24 hours to assure that test results have been recorded. After completing the testing process, you may return to the Drivers License office to obtain your CDL. **You do not have the authority to operate a commercial vehicle until you obtain the CDL.**

There are other federal and state laws which affect drivers operating commercial motor vehicles in all states. Violations of these rules could result in both civil and criminal penalties or disqualify you from driving commercial vehicles.

1.6

SAFETY RULES

- You cannot have more than one license, and the license you do have must be issued from the state in which you reside. If you move to a new state, you must obtain a CDL from that state within thirty (30) days.
- It is your responsibility as an Idaho driver to keep a current address on file with the Idaho Transportation Department. If you move, you must notify the department in writing of the old and new address within 30 days.

- You must notify the Idaho Transportation Department, Driver Services within 30 days if you are convicted in any other state of any traffic violation (except parking). This is true no matter what type of vehicle you were driving at the time of the violation.
- You must notify your employer within 30 days of a conviction for any traffic violation (except parking). This is true no matter what type of vehicle you were driving.
- You must notify your employer if your license is suspended, revoked, or canceled, or if you are disqualified from driving. You must make this notification before the end of the business day following the day you receive the notice of suspension, revocation, cancellation, loss of privileges, or disqualification.
- You must give your employer information on all driving jobs you have held for the past 10 years. You must do this when you apply for a commercial driving job.
- No one can drive a commercial vehicle without a valid CDL. A court may fine you up to \$5000 or put you in jail for breaking this rule.
- Your employer may not let you drive a commercial vehicle if you have more than one license or if your CDL is suspended, revoked or disqualified. A court may fine the employer up to \$5000 or put him/her in jail for breaking this rule.

Serious Traffic Violations - You will lose your CDL for 60 days if you are convicted of two serious traffic violations, or 120 days if convicted of three serious traffic violations in a three year period. The term “conviction” includes forfeiture of bail or bond and withheld judgments. These violations must have been committed while operating a commercial motor vehicle. The following are serious traffic violations:

- Disqualifications

- Excessive speed (15 or more miles above the posted speed limit),
- Reckless driving,
- Improper or erratic lane changes,
- Following the vehicle ahead too closely,
- Violation of any other motor vehicle traffic control laws which result in a fatal traffic accident.

Violation of an Out-of-Service Order - If you are (1) convicted, (2) forfeit bond, or (3) receive a withheld judgment for a violation of an out-of-service order while driving a commercial motor vehicle, you will be disqualified for:

- 90 days for a first conviction,
- One year for a second conviction in 10 years, and
- Three years for subsequent convictions in 10 years.

If transporting hazardous materials or driving a bus (designed to carry 16 or more people) at the time, the driver is disqualified for:

- 180 days for a first conviction, and
- Three years for subsequent convictions in 10 years.

An out-of-service order issued by an authorized enforcement officer is defined as a temporary prohibition against operating a commercial motor vehicle. The order is issued in response to a violation of federal regulations, compatible laws, or to the North American uniform out-of-service criteria (CVSA).

Disqualification for Conviction of a Railroad-Grade Crossing Violation – If you are (1) convicted, (2) forfeit bond, or (3) receive a withheld judgment for a railroad grade crossing violation as specified in 49 CFR part 383 or applicable state laws while driving a commercial motor vehicle, your commercial driving privileges will be disqualified for:

- 60 days for a first conviction
- 120 days for a second conviction during any three year period
- One year for a third or subsequent conviction during any three year period.

Disqualification for Controlled Substance or Alcohol Violations, Leaving the Scene of an Accident, and Felonies - You will lose your CDL for at least one year for a first time offense:

- If you drive a commercial vehicle under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance such as an illegal drug. If you drive a commercial vehicle when your alcohol level concentration is .04 percent or more, you are driving under the influence of alcohol. If your alcohol concentration is less than .04% but you have any detectable amount, you will be placed “out of service” for 24 hours.
- If you refuse to take an evidentiary test for alcohol or other intoxicating substances while you are operating a commercial vehicle.
- If you leave the scene of an accident involving a commercial vehicle you were driving,
- If you use a commercial vehicle to commit a felony,

You will lose your CDL for at least three years for a first offense if any of the above offenses occur while you are operating a commercial vehicle that is transporting hazardous materials that are required to be placarded by the Hazardous Materials Transportation Act.

You will lose your CDL for life if you are convicted, forfeit your bond, or receive a withheld judgment for any of these disqualifying offenses, or any combination of these offenses, for a second time.

You will lose your CDL for life if you use a commercial vehicle to commit a felony involving the manufacture, distribution, or dispensing of a controlled substance.

NOTE: A lifetime disqualification may be reduced once to a 10-year disqualification if an approved rehabilitation program is completed and reinstatement requirements are met.

When you accept an Idaho driver’s license of any kind, you give your implied consent to take an alcohol concentration test if you are suspected of driving under the influence. If you refuse to take the test when requested to do so by a law enforcement officer, that officer can immediately seize your license.

**- Alcohol Tests and the Law
(Implied Consent)**

Idaho's Administrative License Suspension law provides for the immediate seizure of the license of a driver who fails an evidentiary test for alcohol, drugs, or other intoxicating substance.

- Administrative License Suspensions (ALS)

Your driving privileges will be suspended under Section 18-8002A, Idaho Code, if you fail an evidentiary test with an alcohol concentration of .08% (or greater), or .04 to less than .08% while operating or being in actual physical control of a commercial vehicle, or with test results indicating the presence of drugs or other intoxicating substances. Your driver's license will be confiscated by the arresting officer. The suspension will become effective 30 days from the date the *Notice of Suspension* is issued upon failure of an evidentiary test for a period of:

1. 90 days for a first offense with absolutely no driving privileges during the first 30 days. Restricted driving privileges may be requested for the remaining 60 days of the suspension.
2. One year on a second or subsequent failure of the test within 5 years with absolutely no driving privileges of any kind.

If you were operating a commercial vehicle at the time of the failed evidentiary test, and:

1. Your alcohol concentration was .04 to less than .08%, your commercial driving privileges will be suspended for 90 days with absolutely no commercial driving privileges of any kind. Your Class D driving privileges will remain valid.
2. Your alcohol concentration was .08% or greater, or test results indicate the presence of drugs or other intoxicating substances, your driving privileges will be suspended for 90 days with absolutely no commercial driving privileges of any kind. You will also have absolutely no Class D privileges of any kind during the first 30 days of the suspension, but you may request restricted Class D driving privileges for the final 60 days.
3. This is not your first failure of an evidentiary test in the last five years, your driving privileges (commercial and Class D) will be suspended for one year with absolutely no driving privileges of any kind.

These suspensions are separate from any additional penalties or suspensions imposed by the court as a result of being convicted of the offense. Additional information on this law may be found in the Idaho Driver's Manual. A periodic review of both manuals is recommended for all commercial drivers.

All drivers subject to CDL requirements are also required to participate in a controlled substance and alcohol testing program. These requirements include random, reasonable suspicion, post accident, return-to-duty, and follow-up testing for controlled substances and alcohol. Pre-employment controlled substance testing is also required.

- Drug and Alcohol Testing

In the back of this manual are three (3) driving record check forms. These can assist you in obtaining your driving record, also called a DLR.

1.7 DRIVER RECORD REQUESTS

For a copy of your Idaho driving record, complete the form "Idaho Driver's License Record Request." Be sure to include the proper fees. If you fax the

request, payment by Visa or Mastercard is acceptable. Include your card number and the expiration date. The DLR will be returned by mail.

On November 27, 1995, Idaho became the 34th state to implement the Problem Driver Pointer System (PDPS). This system is operated by the National Driver Register (NDR) under the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Under the Problem Driver Pointer System, states are required to submit pointer (driver information) to NDR/PDPS upon certain serious convictions and withdrawals of driving privileges.

- Problem Driver Pointer System

Under NDR/ PDPS, employees or prospective employees may request NDR file checks for their current or prospective employers by completing ITD Form 3846. A copy of this form is located in the back of this manual and is also available from the Driver Services Section at the Idaho Transportation Department. The form requires employer and driver information, and the driver's notarized signature. If the form is brought directly to Driver Services, the signature can be verified with appropriate identification. A fee of \$4.00 must be submitted with the completed form to process the NDR/PDPS file check.

Upon receipt of the completed form and required fee, Driver Services will send an electronic request to NDR/PDPS. NDR may take up to 7 working days to respond to an inquiry. Their response will be either (1) no record found, or (2) one or more probable matches showing the driver identification on file and a list of state(s) having reported an adverse record to the NDR/PDPS. Employers must check with the State of Record to verify driver identity and/or to obtain any details concerning the record content.

Responses will be mailed directly to the employer. NDR/PDPS file checks will only release any pointer information that has been reported to them in the last three years. All request forms will be maintained for a period of five years. A pointer record existing in NDR/PDPS does not mean that the driver has a current withdrawal of driving privileges. Pointer records only indicate that at some time the driver's driving privileges were withdrawn or the driver was convicted of certain serious violations.

Individuals have the right under the Federal Privacy Act to receive reports of their own NDR records and transactions. Individuals wanting to request an NDR/PDPS may write a letter or use ITD Form 3847. A copy of this form is located in the back of this manual and is also available from the Driver Services Section at the Idaho Transportation Department. The form must be completed, notarized, and mailed directly to the National Driver Register. The forms will not be processed by Driver Services. NDR/PDPS will respond directly to the individual and will also include information about previous responses that have been reported on the driver.